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Majles Sessions

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RESALAT Reports on Majles Sessions

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[Excerpts] Report on Yesterday's Open Session of the Majles

Legislative and Parliamentary Division—The open session of the Majles was held yesterday morning with Hojjat ol-Eslam Karrubi presiding. Following the statements by the representatives from Gachsaran, Ahvaz and Rudsar, the Majles went into session.

Bahram Tajgardun, Deputy From Gachsaran

The first speaker was Bahram Tajgardun, the representative from Gachsaran, who said:

Now the time has come for the Majles to carry out its mission and its sensitive role with regard to support for the Islamic popular movement of the intifadah, which is the only hope for the liberation of the people of Palestine, in order for them not to become victims of the greed of the compromising policies of those who claim their support for the liberation of Palestine.

He added: The disintegration of communism, which was the boon of the open political climate and relative freedom of the Soviet people and the Eastern Bloc, was consistently driven forward with the imposition of force by the United States on the oppressed nations of the world. The new changes in the Soviet Union, which will have an uncertain future, may free the Soviet people from the claws of the conspiracies and tricks of the United States. It is hoped that our government figures will protect the country from the possible harm of such changes by drafting proper policies. [passage omitted on Khamene'i speech on living simply]

As you know, nearly one-third of the oil revenues of the country come from Gachsaran, one of the cities of this province, and according to the honorable minister of petroleum, the largest gas reserves in the world have been discovered in the Gachsaran region. Naturally, social justice requires that efforts be made to eliminate deprivation in this province proportionately.

The experts and executive planners must be asked what effective steps have been taken so far in this regard. The Ministry of Petroleum must also be asked what solutions they have offered to eliminate this social problem, considering the excavation of the oil and natural gas resources and the conclusion of the natural gas injection projects on Gachsaran, whereby the people who have been serving for more than 10 years have become unemployed. Let them announce what programs will be put into effect for fixed investments and creating jobs for the native people, in order to prevent Gachsaran from having a similar fate to that of the abandoned Masjed Soleyman.

I suggest that, considering the great oil and natural gas resources, the Ministry of Petroleum take steps to establish refineries, petrochemical facilities, and a college in that province.

The Province of Kohkiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad, in addition to oil and natural gas resources, has other rich resources which could help earn foreign exchange through export. Unfortunately, the people of this province do not benefit from it at all. Despite the fact that large rivers flow from this province, because no investments are made to harness their waters, generally they are not used desirably, and they gush into the Persian Gulf, while the province itself suffers from problems of water for drinking and agriculture.

I suggest that by building dams on the rivers of this province, these God-given gifts be utilized.

I thank the honorable president and officials in connection with the implementation of Paragraph 36 of Note 29 of the budget law in regards to the allocation of $30 million in foreign currency to provide part of the construction materials for education in the country. I would like to point out that it is necessary to compel the executive officials to carry out the ratifications of the Majles in regards to aid for the living expenses and welfare of the educators, the implementation of Paragraph B of Note 8 concerning the allocation of 25 billion rials as interest-free loans in order to strengthen the financial ability of the cooperative consumer companies of the educators, and providing the subsidies needed for the housing loans of the employees of the Ministry of Education.

He added: Noting the statements of the Imam, God bless his soul, that the tribes are the reserves of the revolution, attention must be paid to providing for the needs of this hard-working stratum, such as drinking water, roads, and livestock medicine, as well as creating judicial security and medical insurance. Hence, it is proposed that the supreme council of tribes be activated and an office of tribal affairs, under the direct supervision of the president, be established.

The representatives of Gachsaran issued reminders concerning the failure to take the necessary steps to establish the Payam-e Nur University.

He said: The Province of Kohkiluyeh and Boyer Ahmad is one of the oppressed provinces of the country, all of the villages of which, with the exception of three, are poor. The projected funds of the provinces in Note 37 of the budget law are insufficient to eliminate deprivation from this province. If this situation continues in the future, certainly by the end of the five-year plan the deprivation will not be eliminated. The shortage of specialized manpower and lack of resources, including heavy machinery, have added to the problems in the province.

Amin Bayanak, Deputy From Ahvaz

Amin Bayanak, from Ahvaz, was the second pre-agenda speaker. [passage omitted referring to Khamene'i's speech]

He added: Some time ago, I had an interview with the Voice and Vision in Ahvaz, which, unfortunately, was partly censored. I do not really know how we should deal with the people and the problems of the society. How can we gain the trust of the people? What are the ways to gain such trust? Why should the truth be censored, especially when stated in a sound fashion and when the problems are dealt with in a proper way?

What does the administration of the Voice and Vision think?

How could it be in the interest of our society to only broadcast those points of a speech that they consider positive? The director of the Ahvaz center should leave his office and go to Ahvaz, go to the hospitals, go to the pharmacies, and go to the treatment centers to see the problems and then engage in censorship. Let him see the calamity. If he is convinced that he must, he can hide this problem from the people and keep it a secret. I must say that if the problems are mentioned to the people in a healthy political climate, and if we tell them about the deficiencies, there will no longer be a need for them to listen, let us say, to the counterrevolutionaries.

Mr. Hashemi, the honorable director of the Voice and Vision, I see the problem in the selection of very weak managers, who have been appointed by you or other directors. Unfortunately, the first action of the director chosen for Ahvaz, instead of dealing with cultural and social issues, which is very necessary in the province, is to eliminate the forces, deal with the personnel or censor their speeches.

Do you think censoring speech is the solution? Do you think that if you bury your head in the sand, the people will not see the problems?

Bayanak continued: Another problem in the Province of Khuzestan, unfortunately, is the continuing problem of health and treatment in the province. Here I am addressing Mr. Hashemi, the honorable president, and Dr. Malekzadeh, the honorable minister. I say to them, for God's sake, for the sake of the revolution and for the sake of what you believe in and have accepted responsibility for, examine the situation in the province. Do not send our people in this manner to slaughter and treatment centers. How long does the honorable administration of the country plan to ignore the problems? After three years, while people have been complaining about health and treatment in the province, why has no attention been paid? What have our people done to deserve such weak and incompetent directors? I request of Dr. Malekzadeh that he put an end to this situation.

He added: Another problem of the southern provinces, especially the Province of Khuzestan, is the new electricity rates. His excellency, Mr. Hashemi, the honorable president, in his Friday prayer sermons, argued on the basis of the five-year plan that the Ministry of Energy has no plan to make up for its costs other than to let the people pay for the price of electricity. While accepting the main issue, I say, Mr. Hashemi, you know that the policies of the plan were not aimed at increasing prices. Rather, one of the essential principles of the plan was to reduce the cost. Unfortunately, some of the ministries, due to the weakness of the administration and experts, are unable to accomplish this important task. They choose the simplest way out, which is to raise the rates. As a forewarning, considering the increasing problems of families, I say, do away with this policy. Secondly, you know that Khuzestan, as the Imam said, has paid its price for the war. The people of Khuzestan during the imposed war were homeless. The costs for these families during the war were much higher than in other provinces. Third, in order to escape the intolerable heat, they must use cooling systems such as natural gas coolers. I request that you instruct the Ministry of Energy to first make a revision of the increase of the 250 kilowatt per 24 hours as the minimum use for a family in the southern provinces of the country, and second, give a major discount per kilowatt hour compared to the rest of the country.

He added: In connection with the Ministry of Energy, I must say that the issue of sewage for Ahvaz is approaching a crisis. Mr. President, you have been familiar with our problems in Khuzestan. How should these problems be eliminated? If the problem of sewage in Ahvaz is not dealt with rapidly, you can be assured that there will be dire consequences. Do not allow weakness in planning and weakness in carrying out the responsibilities to mar your efforts and the efforts of your honorable government. I request that a representative be appointed to investigate the problems of the city of Ahvaz.

He continued by thanking the governor general of Khuzestan for his attention to the reminders of the Friday imam of Ahvaz, regarding the speaker's suggestion, and for having taken steps to reduce the amount of 1,000 rials for sewage from the water bills. Reminding the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, he said: The price of prepaying land is one of the problems of Khuzestan. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Development has received money from the oppressed people since 1365 [21 March 1986-20 March 1987] and 1366 [21 March 1987-20 March 1988] and carries out the foundation services for the neighborhoods. Millions of tomans have been collected, but nothing has been done.

He added: Also, they have recently taken another step, raising the price of housing in Article 67 by about one million tomans. Mr. Hashemi, since such prices are being raised so much and so suddenly, is the rate of inflation 9 percent, as you have said? Be fair, the people have been taken by surprise. Stop such increases. Even if

only for the sake of the revolution, (pay attention) to the Imam-like advice of the grand Leader [Khamene'i] and distance yourself from these experts, some of whom seek the destruction of the revolution and who, God willing, are condemned to fail. What has guaranteed our revolution so far is the united presence of our oppressed people, which, God willing, will continue as in the past.

Mr. Hashemi, honorable president, in the sermons of the last Friday prayers warning the gold accumulators and the long arms of the bazaar that if they do not stop their conspiracies or they will have to answer to you, did you hear the pulsating shouts of God is great by our people? Under the pressure of high prices, trying to preserve their dignity and self-respect, working so hard, they endorsed your statements with their shouts of God is great. Believe me, if you deal with these centers of corruption and agents of oppression, you will enjoy the support that is connected to the unflinching will of God. These shouts of God is great were cries in need. These cries of God is great were the shouts of a group of oppressed people who are choked, who love you, and complain to you that you have abandoned them.

Allowing prices to go unchecked has broken the backs of the people and is contrary to the plan. If you follow the plan, you know that to free price controls when production has not increased and when specific steps have not been taken to import goods will certainly be detrimental to the oppressed stratum.

He added: Mr. Vahaji, honorable minister of commerce, I must say to you that allowing prices to go unchecked in the country has resulted in breaking the backs of the oppressed strata. You can be sure that the sound you hear is not the sound of breaking prices; it is the sound of the breaking of the bones of our oppressed people under the heavy burden of prices.

Mohammad Mehdi Rahbari-Amlashi, Deputy From Rudsar

If the factions would declare what they have in common, the confusion in the society might be reduced.

The last speaker was Mohammad Mehdi Rahbari-Amlashi, the representative of Rudsar, who mentioned the conspiracies of the United States. [passage omitted on U.S. atrocities in Middle East]

He added: The improper use of government resources, purchasing unnecessary equipment, such as furniture, and changing decorations, personal use of government vehicles, constructing huge buildings at the seaside for summer holidays, improper use of private airplanes despite the availability of public airlines, unnecessary trips abroad, giving government foreign currency and extra pay to those who at times go abroad on personal business, the frequency of such trips abroad for most officials, granting government resources and credit to some associations, the employment and use of family members and acquaintances in government organizations even though they are not needed, receiving a kickback for foreign purchases and foreign currency at the 60-toman rate for production units and selling the products at open-market prices and using the difference for unnecessary expenditures are some of the points common among certain officials and organizations. The government must take this opportunity to select several competent people as a task force to identify such cases and those responsible to the judicial organizations whenever they see them.

Concerning political issues, the revered Leader of the revolution provided valuable directives. If these factions sit together, announce what they have in common and act kindly toward one another, the confusion in the society might decrease, and people might breathe easier. If the factions are unable to come to an understanding, in my opinion, an impartial body such as the Supreme Council for National Security should assemble the existing political factions and announce their common points and differences.

Of course, at the present time, all the political factions have announced their allegiance to the statements of the Leader, and this is an occasion for rejoicing. However, experience has shown, with regard to the statements of the Imam about unity and avoiding conflict, that such advice tends to be forgotten after a while.

In my opinion, it is better for those who follow these lines to organize "parties," publish their party constitutions in which their political, economic, and social positions are expressed in detail, and be responsible before the members and supporters of their own parties, in which case, the people will know what to do, because under the present conditions, there are no differences among the political factions, especially in their general statements. The outcome of the arguments is: such-and-such a person holds some position and is not a good person because he does not belong to our faction. In short, the argument is over (power).

Explaining the problems of his constituency, he said: Rice, which is one of the staples and strategic products of the country, unfortunately, has not been paid attention to very much.

1. The equipment needed by the rice farmers has not been provided. [passage omitted on increase of rice production costs]

The representative of Gilan and Mazandaran requests of the government and Mr. Hashemi that, first, in the next three or four months, when the domestic producers make their rice available, the distribution of imported rice be seriously avoided. Second, in the opinion of the experts, it is projected that this year we will have more than a 15-percent increase in production, compared to the previous year. Therefore, the uncontrolled import of rice must be avoided.

2. In connection with the advancement of the Caspian Sea water, much has been said and written in the press. But nothing is being done in practice to prevent or

compensate for the damages. Many of the residential and office regions as well as agricultural lands along the Caspian Sea in Gilan and Mazandaran, including the cities of Kalachay and Chaboksar in Rudsar, are along the course of sea water advancement. Many people have had to evacuate their hearth and home. We cannot endure seeing people's homes [vanish] and just remain onlookers.

Despite the fact that Mr. Hashemi gave instructions for funds to be provided to solve this problem, as of now nothing has been done.

At present, sea walls are the best and most effective way to confront this threat.

I suggest that a headquarters be established in the presidential office to consistently and constantly follow-up the issue of the advancement of the water of the Caspian Sea and find a solution. So far, no organization or authority has said why and how the sea water advances, how to fight it, what must be done, and what must the people do. The Ministry of Energy, which is responsible for many tasks, asks only for funds and does not show much inclination to handle this task.

3. The Gilan and Zanjan earthquake, which was so devastating, was discussed in the early days, in terms of the five-year plan and other events, which set the country years behind because of this earthquake. Thank God, with the planning and the initiative of the government and local officials, many of the problems resulting from the earthquake have either been resolved or are being studied and dealt with. In my opinion, one of the most valuable and proud tasks of the government was its handling of the destruction and matters related to the earthquake, which, to be fair, was carried out properly.

This year, about 9 billion tomans were allocated for repairs and completion of fundamental establishments and about 13 billion tomans in interest-free loans for more than 100,000 residential units. In order to complete them, the same amount in funds is needed for next year, which, God willing, will be provided.

One of the most important and vital tasks that was accomplished was the repair, reconstruction, and refilling of Sepidrud Dam, on which the economic life of Gilan is dependent and that provides water for more than 150,000 hectares of agricultural land. In connection with the earthquake, several points should be noted.

A. A $250 million loan, which was supposed to be received, has apparently not yet been received.

B. There is a severe shortage of cement for the reconstruction of the earthquake-stricken regions, which must be eliminated. At present, there is no cement to be found in Gilan, and when it is found, it is sold for 300 tomans a bag.

C. Residential loans for the earthquake-stricken cities, which were supposed to be 250,000 tomans, have not yet been announced.

Examination of the Proposal To Eliminate Unnecessary Expenditures and Prevent Luxuries

Bahonar, the representative from Tehran, as one of the proponents of the proposal, explained: In the consultation that took place with the officials and honorable representatives, it was decided that this time, God willing, instead of writing a letter for the sake of publicity in support of the statements of the grand Leader, the Majles would take steps, within its ability and in order to carry out the decrees and directives of the Leader, to open a way in various areas referred to by his honor.

He added: The statements of the Leader had various dimensions and this proposal is to open a way to implement one of those directives which is the issue of "decreasing unnecessary government expenditures and preventing love of luxury."

While the country is going through the reconstruction period and we need to revise our economic issues and move toward economic reforms, this movement will necessarily create pressures on families, and some of the low-income families, which is not a small group in our country, may face numerous problems in this movement while reaching for this goal. It is necessary for the people to believe in and accept, as in the past, putting up resistance on the military fronts, as they have, to engage in self-sacrifice, such as the offering of their loved ones to the sacred defense, to protect the geographical and ideological borders of the Islamic Republic. It is necessary also for the people to believe that at the present time, they are confronting a difficult and troublesome front. In order to reconstruct the economy of the country, which is a legacy of the tyrant's time, the economy that was severely harmed before the sacred defense, must be viewed as a battlefront. The first step is for the leaders of this front, those who are on the front lines of the battle zone, to have created this readiness in themselves. In the economic reconstruction and on this economic front, the leaders and soldiers on the front lines are the officials of the regime, the ministers, the representatives of the Majles, the directors of government companies, the directors of banks, and the officials in charge of the judicial branch, legislative, and executive branches. Naturally, all the people must also take part in this battle and they have done so. But the commanders at the battlefront must be better prepared to endure the economic problems and difficulties. Hence, we thought that in terms of reducing unnecessary expenditures and do away with luxury, which unfortunately is being seen in some places—where practical readiness is unexistent—the commanders of this front, regrettably, sometimes deviate from the frame of mind that they must create for themselves to make themselves and their actions into a model for the people. Hence, the people do not believe them. When the people see some of their actions, behavior, expenditures, profits, and comings and goings, they do not believe that the cancellation of certain subsidies is the only solution to our economic problems.

They may not believe the concept of this statement and question: If this is indeed the only way, then what is all this so-called spending and generosity here and there and then later justify them as a management device? When they hear all these justifications—that the latest Mercedes Benz and so-and-so villa are all tools of management—they conclude that the economic battle does not exist at all and the elimination of subsidies is not actually essential.

In order to inculcate these ideas in the people and, God willing, act in such a way, as the infallible ones recommended, that we set an example for the people with our actions and not our loose tongues, we have proposed a committee to supervise such expenditures.

He added: There are some actions and behaviors that, unfortunately, at the present are not illegal, but immoral and contrary to the norm. They go against kindness and friendship between the officials and the people. We want the committee to follow up, and this is how the instructions, bylaws and methods of spending were approved by the concerned authorities.

The third duty of this committee is, after the ratifications of the bylaws and instructions, to supervise their implementation so that if there are violations, they are reported to the head of that branch and followed up to eliminate such violations.

Harati, Deputy From Sabzevar (Opponent)

The first opponent of the proposal was Mr. Harati, who said: I do not think there is even one representative in the Majles who supports love of luxury and waste. But the issue is that this proposal will not take us anywhere, and our goals will not be achieved. Also, there is no need for this proposal. The Majles enters the arena when there is a void in the law. We have a supervisory organization over all three branches. In the government, it is the plan and budget; in the judicial branch, it is the national inspection office; and the Majles oversees the proper implementation of the tasks, and whenever it sees the slightest deviation or error, it stands firmly to eliminate it. I am surprised at what the proposal intends to do despite all these supervisory organizations.

He added: The issue of love of luxury represents a deviant culture and a token of the West. Without planning, you cannot change it with a mechanical action. Riding in a Mercedes Benz used to be frowned upon, and a woman could not leave her hair out, and would not dare to do so, but now these have become highly regarded, and they dare do it.

Harati added: How can a committee composed of six people control and supervise 3,000 government companies and so many government organizations? What are the executive mechanisms and the legal regulations of this law? When an organization says that you have made a budget plan and it is acting in accordance with it, how do you respond?

Alhoseyni, Deputy From Arak Deputy (Supporter)

Alhoseyni, the representative from Arak, was the first supporter of the proposal. He first said: I believe we must all begin with ourselves and respond positively to the proper and timely directives of the grand Leader. It is the right of the Majles to supervise. If it had supervised properly, it would not have come to this. If we had controlled the expenditures that were outside accounting, such discussions would be unnecessary. But if this proposal does not receive votes in the Majles, it would be unfortunate. This proposal insists on and emphasizes fighting waste and love of luxury.

He added: The proper action would be to make the directives of the grand Leader into law; this is a good move, which should be carried out.

Stating that people are troubled by officials who remain distant from them, Alhoseyni said: 1. It is the bureaucracy that governs the administrative offices, which have caused the officials to keep their distance from the people. 2. Luxuries have become very common, and this danger is so severe that our Leader had to warn us. 3. The officials do not take people serious and are courteous toward them (Of course, we have good, competent administrators in the country, and they are not small in number.)

He then said: I oppose creating a new organization and putting a burden on the treasury. But our problem is the implementation of the law and not a legal void.

Safa'i, Deputy From Bakhtaran (Opponent)

The next opponent of this proposal was Arsalan Safa'i, who expressed hope that the Majles would be able to take basic steps to implement the statements of the grand Leader. He then said: In my opinion, this proposal will not do anything towards implementing the instructions of the Leader. The people are aware of the Leader's decrees, and if we reject this proposal, it will have the positive effect of showing that the Majles is aware and understands what it is doing. We suffer from a legislative malady in the Majles. This and other proposals will have an immediate tranquilizing effect on the society. But the most important action is to properly implement the laws in the organizations. If this is done well, there is no need for this proposal. Rather, through long-term planning we can achieve it.

He also pointed out: Do we not have laws that deal with officials who come to serve and gain wealth from their position, for which he is labeled a traitor? The wealth of all officials must be audited. Did our late Imam not declare his property to the Supreme Judicial Council of the time? Now, which official have we called up for an audit of his wealth?

Arsalan Safa'i added: Some prominent people in both factions have signed this proposal, all of whom I respect. But, I want them to come forward, for God's sake, and to act truly in accordance with the instructions of the grand

Leader and solve their differences. Did our late Imam not say frequently, resolve your differences? What was the reason for the painful and sorrowful silence of the Imam after accepting Resolution 598? The result has been your attitude towards the Imam's instructions. Why do you behave as you do in response to the instructions of the Leader? If you want to start an inspection system, it will require a huge organization. Does the information agency in this country not report such violations to us? Examine the violations.

Salehabadi, Deputy From Mashhad (Supporter)

Salehabadi, the representative from Mashhad, spoke in support of this proposal. Stating that if we leave government organizations as they are, they will lose their usefulness and the country will be harmed, he said: Control and supervision are in the interests of the country and in the interest of entrenching the revolution. If the strong lever of supervision is created in the organizations, all will try to act according to the rules and regulations.

He then said: We must give the Majles a decisive role in regards to the details of the proposal. The problems of the proposal must be solved, such as appointing two representatives of the government because most of the volume of waste, love of luxury and huge expenditures concern those organizations over whose affairs we cannot have strong supervision. Hence, it is the role of the Majles to supervise.

Salehabadi pointed out: Recently a seminar of the ambassadors and charges d'affaires was held in Mashhad, where three kinds of food were served. Now, whether it was prepared by the government or the Imam Reza shrine endowment, why should there be three kinds of food? We must supervise to prevent extravagant and aristocratic tables.

Hoseyni-Kuhestani, Deputy From Behshahr (Opponent)

Hoseyni-Kuhestani, the representative from Behshahr, spoke in opposition to the proposal: This proposal will overshadow the lofty speech and clear message of the grand Leader, because in the past whenever our late Imam cried out, the next day we would see it discussed in newspapers, Friday prayers and other circles, but gradually those valuable statements have been forgotten. This time, too, the statements of the Leader are being forgotten.

He then said: This proposal resembles a political proposal rather than a legislative proposal. It is questionable why the writers of the proposal have only taken a few aspects of the total statements of the Leader. Some of the signatories who are from both factions are problematic for the regime. When the signatories of the proposal stand side by side, many of the statements of the Imam will be complied with.

Hoseyni-Kuhestani also added: Our problem is not the necessary expenditures of the government organizations or any particular official. Rather, the statements of the Leader were in connection with love of luxury and the palaces of the officials, which is where we must start. If a minister, an official or a representative begins with himself, love of luxury in some office or in the Majles will no longer exist. For example, if we say that an official who is going to be in charge of an office or a ministry should not have more than a certain amount of land and home, he should not be given a position in the regime if his situation is otherwise, this is where the people's protests must be resolved.

Zakeri, Deputy From Quchan (Supporter)

Mohammad Baqer Zakeri, the representative from Quchan, spoke in support of this proposal. Pointing out that the wise words of the grand Leader must be used politically and for propaganda purposes, and, God forbid, we should not make a club out of them to beat others on the head, he said:

Let us sincerely, in allegiance to the Leader, look for solutions so that we can implement some of these statements that are those of the Imam and Islam. Unfortunately, when it comes to action, we are ambivalent and fail to act on our words.

He continued: Right now, is the statement of his holiness 'Ali, [which says] that justice is obligatory, practiced? He said we should put our lives at the level of the weakest of our people so that poverty does not become an undue pressure on the poor and the destitute. When should it be implemented? Now, as we have drafted the economic policies, we have to, as the gentlemen say, eliminate the subsidies; we have to, as the gentlemen say, engage in surgery. The essence of the speech of the Leader is that, while performing this surgery, why must we cause the remaining blood in the bodies of the oppressed to spill out, and why must we use the remainder of the blood of the oppressed to heal our sick economy? Why are we asking the people to believe in this kind of justice? The essence of the speech of the Leader is that we should divide the expenditures that result from the elimination of subsidies fairly.

He pointed out: Let us believe that the system of managements has not yet assumed the color of pure Islam. This must start somewhere. The best opportunity is precisely what the grand Leader expressed, considering the existing conditions. If we are not willing to make the sacrifice, let us be willing to accept equality. Today is the day that we must truly make an effort to act upon what we have said so far. Today is the day to pass this test successfully. Today is the day that through action we must prove who is a supporter of the Leader, who are the true supporters of the Leader, and who are the true supporters of religious guardianship. It is astounding that when the Leader speaks, and politically it is in the interests of some people, everyone shouts and blows horns. They issue many communiques in support of the Leader. The Friday imams issue many communiques.

Assemblies gather in support of the statements of the Leader. But where is any sign of implementing the Leader's decree?

He then said: The opponents say this proposal will not take us anywhere. You have not offered a proposal to replace it. Why do you only talk? How many proposals have come to the Majles so far in regards to the statements of the Imam? This is the first time that a proposal has been brought to the Majles that has covered these aspects.

In conclusion, Zakeri added: The gentlemen say, begin with ourselves. What if we do not? Then there has to be a law to control it. We say this proposal guarantees all the statements of the Leader.

Kheyrkhah, Deputy From Lahijan (Opponent)

Kamel Kheyrkhah, the representative from Lahijan, spoke in opposition and said: Not only do I believe that this proposal raises questions, but I believe that the statements of the Leader will be destroyed by the implementation of this proposal. Do you really have a legislative void to prevent love of luxury and waste? Do you really have a void in supervision? Has Article 86 solved this problem? Resolve the conflicts between the two factions constructively, and the rest will be solved.

He then said: I say that you have no legislative void. If the problem is not there, then why do you waste your time? Hence, the ratification proposal is not in our interests. This proposal, like some of the others, will be filed away and forgotten.

Movahhedi-Savoji, Deputy From Saveh (Supporter)

The next supporter was Movahhedi-Savoji, the representative from Saveh, who began by saying: Whether you state it or not, the warning and the statements of the Leader have their effect.

He asked for the ratification of the general points of the proposal and said: In the details, it must be said that none of the government institutions, the judicial branch or the Majles may change their furniture, paintings and office decorations in less than 10 years. The holding of seminars and conferences are often fruitless and futile and may be an excuse for the families of the gentlemen to have a good time. Why should seminars that cost 50 or 60 million [tomans] be held? Why? Hence, they must be prevented. Also, it is a tragedy for the officials to compete with each other out of love of luxury. Why? In the city halls, there is much waste and huge expenditures are made. Hence, all of this must be controlled and supervised.

Alviri, Deputy From Tehran (Opponent)

Morteza Alviri spoke briefly on the reasons for his opposition to the proposal and said that the law to fight love of luxury, waste and the high cost of organizations already exists under Note 30 of the plan.

He then concluded: If we go to the consumer model, then certainly there will not be any violations. Unfortunately, we do not base our work on planning.

Then Majid Ansari, a signatory to the proposal, explained: We offered this proposal in order to prevent waste in the treasury and to fight excessive spending and love of luxury. Is the rivalry between the officials wanting to ride in deluxe cars healthy? In our opinion, if these luxuries spread, they will threaten the society. When an official realizes that love of luxury and waste are violations, he will certainly stop.

He said: We shall add some articles to the proposal about the wealth of the officials of the country and that there should be accountability in order to keep the society healthy.

Mohajerani (Representative of the Government)

'Ata'ollah Mohajerani, the representative of the government, spoke on the views of the government about this proposal and said: Undoubtedly, one of the good effects of the statements of the Leader is this proposal. If we want to obtain information about the number of those who make use of confiscated houses, about trips made abroad, and who makes use of government vehicles, we can do so easily.

As a representative of the government, he pointed out: The representatives from both factions who have signed this proposal, devised the proposal in such a way that the main defendant is the government, the ministries, the institutions, and the government companies and organizations. There are no signs of any inclination towards luxury in the Majles and among the honorable representatives of the Majles and the judicial branches, which I believe exists in the armed forces, one of the major users of national funds. In this supervisory council, we anticipate that certainly the Majles, the judicial branch and the armed forces must be added so that, naturally, there will be a fair outcome on this worthwhile issue, which is motivation for the proposal, God willing.

Following the statements of the representative of the government, the general points of the proposal were put to a vote and ratified.

Also, upon the request of a number of representatives, the proposal was moved to a number-one priority, in order that it be examined more thoroughly for its details in the committees and sent to the open session for examination.

The report by the parliamentary correspondent of RESALAT indicates that the examination of the details of the bill on the charter of the agriculture and industry company of Martyr Beheshti was discussed as the second item on the agenda, and 12 articles of this bill were ratified.

Part One.

Article 1. The Martyr Beheshti Agriculture and Industry Company will be established as the result of the implementation of the legislative bill concerning the ownership and use of land located near the Dez Dam and the cancellation of agricultural and industrial agreements ratified in 1358 [21 March 1979-20 March 1980] by the Islamic Revolution Council, and based on the regulations in this charter.

Article 2. The Martyr Beheshti Agriculture and Industry Company, referred to as the Company in this charter, is affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture; its center is Dezful; and it has the authority to establish agencies and offices in other areas of the country, within the framework of the ratified organization.

Article 3. The aim of the Company is to carry out agricultural and animal husbandry operations and create affiliated industries and products. To meet the above objectives, the Company may:

A. Revitalize the land for cultivation and harvesting of agricultural products, raising livestock and water foul, etc.

B. Carry out operations to improve and increase cultivation, qualitatively and quantitatively, participating in the procurement, production and propagation of improved seeds, and raising the level of agricultural knowledge in the region.

C. Develop and create related industries for processing agricultural and livestock products.

D. Carry out the needed activities to achieve the above-mentioned goals.

Note. Upon the approval of the board of directors, and in observance of the related regulations, in order to achieve its goals, the Company may engage in partnerships with private and government companies and obtain loans and credit from banks and domestic credit establishments, in accordance with the related laws and regulations.

Article 4. The Company shall remain a special joint stock company for an unlimited period.

Article 5. The Company has legal status and shall be financially independent.

Article 6. The Company may carry out, for a fee, in accordance with the regulations to be approved by the General Assembly, activities referred by government and private agencies and by the appropriate persons.

Article 7. The initial capital investment of the Company shall be 200 million rials, including 2,000 shares of 100,000 rials each, which belong totally to the government of the Islamic Republic, and shall be provided through the cash flow of the Company.

Note. Stationary and nonstationary property subject to the capital investment of the Company shall be assessed by experts chosen by the General Assembly within a maximum of six months from the date of ratification and determined on the basis of the actual capital of the Company.

Article 8. The Company may, upon prior approval of the General Assembly and on the basis of related laws, assess the assets of the Company, divide them into 10,000-ria' shares, and sell them, up to a maximum of 49 percent, with preference given to the employees of the unit and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Article 9. Until the total savings of the Company reach one-half of the capital investments, the Company shall each year allocate 10 percent as its special profi reserves.

Part Two. The Organization of the Company

Article 10. The Company shall have the following organizations:

A. General assembly

B. Board of directors and general manager

C. Auditor (inspector)

Article 11. Government shall The representative of the government in the General Assembly shall be the minister of agriculture, the minister of construction jihad, the minister of economic affairs and finance, the minister of plan and budget and the minister of energy. The minister of agriculture shall be the president of the General Assembly.

Article 12. The sessions of the General Assembly shall be held normally twice a year, once by Tir [22 June-22 July] of each year, to approve the balance sheet and calculate the profits and losses, and once in the second semester, to approve the budget and policies for the following year.

Note. Other issues about which decisions are among the duties of the General Assembly can normally be discussed in that Assembly.

* 25 Aug

91AS1497A Tehran RESALAT in Persian 26 Aug 91 pp 5, 12

[Excerpts] Report on Yesterday's Open Session of the Majles

Legislative and Parliamentary Division—The open session of the Majles was held yesterday morning with Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemian presiding. Following the statements by the representatives from Tehran, Mianeh, Khorramabad, and Kerman, the chairman of the meeting spoke, and then the Majles went into session.

Below follows the report of the parliamentary correspondent of RESALAT on yesterday's open session of the Majles.

Morteza Katira'i, Representative From Tehran

To weaken any one of the three branches is to weaken the regime.

The first pre-agenda speaker was Morteza Katira'i, the representative of Tehran, who stated that to weaken any one of the three branches is to weaken the regime and added:

As the executive branch is weak so is the regime. If anyone effects the weakening of the Majles from the Friday prayer podium or from anywhere else, he will weaken the regime. The Constitution clearly states the duties and authority of each branch. Article 84 states: "Any representative is responsible before the people and has the right to express opinions on all domestic and foreign issues of the country." Article 86 explicitly states: "In carrying out their duties, the representatives of the Majles are completely free to express opinions and to vote, and they cannot be prosecuted or arrested for the views they have expressed in the Majles or the votes they have cast in accordance with their duties as representatives."

Hence, the representative of the Majles must be in touch with the people and learn about their problems. To eliminate these problems, he must somehow present them during the Majles [sessions], and no one can prevent him from doing so. Obviously, the opinions expressed by the representatives of the people based on realities and truth, as well as their reminders, suggestions, and legal and sincere criticism, will not weaken the regime but will reform and strengthen it.

He then said: Among the current problems that have brought suffering to the people of our beloved country is the high prices of public needs. Unfortunately, in some cases, they are increasing day by day. Obviously, this price increase is initiated by the government and the private sector. In regards to the causes of the increase in the price of government services, there are various opinions. Some officials say that these high prices are the result of Majles ratifications. In other words, the gradual elimination of subsidies and the pricing policy are the result of the responsibilities conferred on the government by the Majles. But this is not so. So as to clarify the issue for the public, I will read that part of the five-year plan that is referred to by the government to show that these responsibilities have not been conferred unconditionally.

Paragraph 4 of the general policies of the five-year plan states:

"The changing of the rations of essential goods must be carried out in such a way that the paid subsidies are gradually, within the framework of the social security system of the country, focused on the low-income individuals."

The five-year plan law also states:

"In regards to general items, such as water, electricity, natural gas, liquid gas, kerosene, diesel fuel, furnace oil, motor oil, and communications, the main objective is towards the gradual provision of the acceptable expenditures of the new and current capital of the companies producing these items throughout the course of the plan. The general indicator in this case is that the prices of the goods or services in question be equivalent to the final cost. Nevertheless, in order to support the low-income classes and expand the agricultural sector, various rates will be imposed. To prevent waste in the consumption of the general items mentioned above, there will be an increase in price for consumption over the minium level of need."

As you can see, first, the law emphasizes the perpetuation of the payment of subsidies for low-income individuals. Second, in accordance with this law, government services must be offered to low-income classes at low rates. (Of course, when consumption is over the minimum level of need, price increases are permissible.) Here the question is immediately raised as to who the low-income people are and what the poverty level is.

In 1369 [21 March 1990-20 March 1991], the experts mentioned the poverty level to be a monthly income of less than 15,000 tomans. (This figure may have increased?) In other words, a person whose monthly income is less than this amount would be considered low-income and would be eligible for this benefit. Because the income level of most people is below the poverty line, they are eligible for these benefits, and as long as they live under these conditions, they must be eligible for subsidies and the use of low-cost government services. In other words, only a small number of wealthy people, who have sucked the blood of the people and accumulated great wealth, are the exception to this rule.

He added: All this concerns the government sector. In regards to the private sector, I must say that this sector has been completely abandoned, and anyone can sell his goods at any price he wants. Essentially, the increase in the government prices has led the private sector to the mistaken assumption that it is quite free to determine prices. The halt in carrying out government punishment has also strengthened this supposition. I must point out that the law of government punishment was ratified in 1367 [21 March 1988-20 March 1989] by the honorable assembly for determining expediency of the regime and is still valid. Article 1 of this law states:

"Considering the need for government supervision and control over the economic activities and the need for carrying out the rules of legislation and the regulations of distribution, those who violate the regulations will be punished in accordance with the articles of this law."

As you see, in this law, government control over the economic activities and the implementation of the pricing regulations have been determined as necessary, and the instruction to punish the violators has been provided. This law includes 56 articles in which the

pricing procedure for goods and the level of the punishment of the hoarders and price hikers have been clearly determined. Yet, we know that at the present time this law is either not carried out or is enacted so feebly that it would seem that it does not exist at all, and the private sector is taking advantage of people with peace of mind.

Take a look at tenants. See what is happening to them. At the present, a husband and wife who are both employees and vacate their rented home, for whatever reason, even if they put their two salaries together, still cannot pay their rent.

It has at times occurred that people have sold one of their kidneys to pay a deposit to a landlord. Who is responsible for such injustice?

Continuing his speech, Katira'i proposed: Rapid steps must be taken in regards to the pricing of goods and the controlling of prices. The punishment division of the government must once again begin its activities, and competitive foreign currency should be controlled and paid under regulations. The situation of foreign trade must be clarified as one of the principles of the Constitution, so that our policy with regard to foreign purchases will not be subject to personal tastes. At one time, any foreign purchase was handled through the procurement and distribution centers, which had created a strong data base in regards to foreign trade in the country. But with the recent policies, with the omission of the procurement and distribution center and lack of control over foreign purchases, billions of dollars in foreign currency have been taken out of the country because of overpriced purchases. This is thenresult of the lack of information and sometimes the profiteering of the importers of goods and raw materials. Considering that in 1369 [1990-91], we had about $30 billion worth of foreign purchases, it becomes clear what huge profits were poured into the pockets of foreign and domestic middlemen.

Seyyed Sajad Hojati, the Representative From Mianeh

The way for the Palestinian nation to be liberated is through the intifadah.

Seyyed Sajad Hojati, the representative of Mianeh, was the second pre-agenda speaker. He first referred to the visit of the grand leader of the revolution to the Province of Lorestan and its very beneficial social and spiritual effects on public opinion and expressed hope that his honor will bless other provinces and oppressed areas for everyone to benefit from his virtues.

In his speech, Hojati referred to the directives of the leader of the Islamic revolution in connection with the love of luxury and said: These statements created a great and beneficial change in reviving a correct and healthy life that has caused joy in and is welcomed by the honorable officials and the public. Moreover, the honorable heads of the three—executive, legislative and judicial—branches, each a distinguished personality in the regime, have significantly verified it. Especially in the Majles, the honorable representatives ratified it as an urgent proposal. The question now is how it should be carried out and implemented. To inform everyone and to set everyone's mind at ease, I suggest that the heads of the three branches who are among the distinguished personalities of the regime and then the honorable ministers, the honorable representatives, the security forces and the heads of guilds and Islamic councils, each in accordance with their practical duties in their own offices, select religious and pious inspectors to examine its implementation in their place of responsibility, even about their living conditions, if need be, and to question, punish or even dismiss those who violate this law.

He then said: Let me add in regards to improper veiling, lack of veils, Western cultural issues and whatever is un-Islamic, they should be dealt with similarly. In other words, until we have reformed ourselves, to expect anything from others is unfair. Hopefully, the heads of the guilds and Islamic councils will appoint supervisors and inspectors for their own guilds, and if violations occur, they will be dealt with in accordance with the regulations of the guild, including suspension of licenses or even cancellation of licenses. Otherwise, the law and the instructions of the leader will be words in the air.

He referred to the recent changes in the Soviet Union and said: The Great Satan, the United States, has swallowed the Soviet Union, despite its being such a superpower, and, with promises of improving the Soviet economy and providing dollars, it has convinced Mr. Gorbachev to send the Soviet Jews to Israel, as he does. When Mr. Gorbachev was gone for a few days, Mr. Bush was more upset than anyone else, because with his departure there was the danger of the return of communist power.

He said: Mr. Gorbachev was expected to realize the harm of his policy of following Bush and the United States and revise it.

Referring to the uprising of the Palestinian people, Hojati emphasized: The only way for the Palestinian people to be liberated has been and is through the intifadah. The Muslim leaders, the free people of the world and the Muslims of the world must help them.

In another part of his speech, the representative from Mianeh made reminders to the executive officials concerning the problems of his constituency and requested attention be paid to them.

In conclusion, he said: Finally, as my duty dictates, I must say that, considering the frequent visits and correspondence with the honorable minister of interior about the unhealthy situation and the creation of severe stifling and discontent resulting from the mismanagement and pride of the governor and his political allies he has brought from Maragheh and appointed in executive positions, including the deputy governor to central lieutenant governor and others, and noting that this was mentioned to the honorable president during visits to him when he issued instructions for steps to be taken,

unfortunately so far no results have been attained. I do not want to speak more than I already have on such matters here to please the enemies. What is in the interests of the Islamic revolution in the region I have stated, and I expect that such individuals not be placed in sensitive positions. In one word, if it is good, we have had enough of it. Let them take this goodness, along with the colleagues who have been brought to Mianeh, to their own city so that they too will benefit from it. If it is not good, what have the martyr-nurturing people of Mianeh done wrong to suffer such mistreatment and ill behavior from this gang? If, God forbid, no attention is paid, I request that in national divisions, the Mianeh region be placed in a district of the city of Maragheh, so that we too can have peace of mind in regards to responsibility.

'Ali 'Enayati, the Representative From Khorramabad

'Ali Enayati was the fourth speaker. He took three minutes off of the time of the representative from Kerman.

In his brief speech he referred to the blessed and valuable visit of the grand leader of the Islamic revolution to the Province of Lorestan. [passage omitted on Khamene'i's visit to Lorestan Province]

Mostafa Mo'azenzadeh, the Representative From Kerman

The excessive population increase along with the decrease in the gross national product is an important factor in the increase of poverty.

The last pre-agenda speaker was Mostafa Mo'azenzadeh from Kerman.

Honoring Government Week and the memory of the revered martyrs, Raja'i and Bahonar, he said: Today, I will mainly speak about economic issues and begin my speech with the statement that the economic characteristics of the country in recent years, mostly the result of unavoidable reasons, have brought on serious imbalances. These characteristics are:

1. Alternative changes and the severe fluctuation in the price of oil, which have brought annual revenues from $22 billion to $7 billion for the country. The necessary levers for pricing oil have been in the hands of elements that govern the global economy. The fluctuation in price has eliminated the possibility of any sort of planning on our part in recent years.

2. The excessive increase in population, which, along with the decrease in the gross national product, has become an important factor in the increase in poverty and the decrease in the people's purchasing power.

3. The decrease in the gross national product at fixed rates from 1356-1368 [21 March 1977-20 March 1990], which has decreased by 10 percent.

4. The declining trend in the generation and accumulation of capital in the country continued seriously until 1368 [21 March 1989-20 March 1990], and only in 1369 [1990-91] has it increased.

In order to clarify the issue, it must be said that the ratio in the generation of capital on the gross national product was 31 percent in 1356 [21 March 1977-20 March 1978] and it decreased to 10.3 percent in 1368 [1989-90].

5. Shortage of foreign currency: The $25 billion in foreign currency revenues of 1356 [1977-78] dropped to $7 billion in the last years of the war, while during this period, the price of the dollar also declined compared to other foreign currencies. In other words, if the population of 34 million in 1356 [1977-78] had $25 billion worth of foreign currency, the population of 55 million at the present, considering the decline in the value of the dollar, would need at least three times the foreign currency revenues to reach the conditions of 1356 [1977-78].

6. The budget deficit: As it is unclear in the budget of recent years [as published], due to the financial structure of the country being dependent on oil revenues and the lowering of the level of tax collection, the budget deficit increased through 1367 [1988-89] and has only decreased in the past two years.

7. Increase in cash flow: The budget deficit inevitably has dragged us into borrowing from the Central Bank and ultimately to an increase in cash flow. While in a healthy economy, the supply of money is in line with the gross national product, with a 10-percent decrease in the gross national product, we have had an increase of 900 percent in cash flow.

8. Inflation: The budget deficit and the subsequent increase in cash flow is a cycle that inevitably creates inflation. This is the main root of high prices, which cannot be eliminated with speeches, orders, prohibitions, or recommendations. The economic imbalance will undoubtedly impose on the society the chronic pressure of inflation.

9. Incompetence: The imports of the country up to the end of 1368 [20 March 1990] showed a figure of $189 billion. If 30 percent of these imports required investments, the actual figure would be about $56 billion, which, due to incompetence, has not shown much of a return and generally has been turned into useless hardware.

10. Artificial prices: As a result of the war, the government had to stabilize the economy and imposed a bureaucratic system to control prices. Prices have lost their moderate correlation and in some cases are not considered a factor to warrant investment. On the other hand, they encourage the consumer to consume more.

Look at the situation with regard to wheat in the country, which, despite the frequent recommendations of the Imam, because of the artificial prices and lack of an

actual price, people have stopped planting. On the other hand, the consumer uses more wheat than he needs.

He added: The above-mentioned 10 characteristics, which in practice have caused serious and critical problems for us, are for the most part the result of the following.

1. The perverse and incorrect policies of the tyrannical time of the shah, the negative effects of which have been felt in all areas, including production, consumption, and investment.

2. The problems after the revolution, particularly the imposed war, have forced us to pursue undesirable economic paths followed by the halt in many projects and the elimination of national capital.

3. The global economic problems, part of which are unloaded upon us, including global inflation and the decrease in the value of the dollar, which resulted in the decrease in our purchasing power. He added: Considering the above-mentioned problems, the government is facing a period in which it must either continue a policy of stabilization or pursue economic modifications. In the economic stabilization policy, decisions are political and economic, whereas in the policy of modification, decisions become economic-political. In the policy of economic stabilization, due to the war conditions, the government is forced to look at the society politically, and this view forces it to expand its duties and create a large bureaucracy; however, in a modified economy, the first task is to eliminate the bureaucracy and reduce the expectations of the people.

Honorable representatives! The government must either continue the war-time economic policies and face the crisis in the future or deal seriously with the economic problems now.

Here, it must be said that, unfortunately, some factions do not take the expediencies of war time into consideration and politically react unfavorably to the economic issues of the past.

Mr. Hashemi, you who have had the courage to deal with crises, today, our basic crisis is our chronic economic illness, which requires surgery.

Undoubtedly, this is a difficult and risky path. Mistaken actions, slowing down on the steep rocks and large, deep valleys, delayed attainment of the ideals and objectives, the critical sting of friends and the anxiety and hesitation of other elements are unavoidable in this great task, but the history of this nation requires that we pass through crises.

Mo'azenzadeh added: The oppressive world, with the astonishing speed of technological advancement, has not left us much time for development. I say, frankly, if we do not seriously place our country on the path to development within the next decade or two, our distinguished fate will be to plunge into the abyss of underdevelopment and backwardness and turn into a poverty-stricken country.

We must tolerate hardship to ensure that future generations live in comfort. We must work hard to have a prosperous, free and independent country. Political independence without development is meaningless in today's world. It is conceivable that a country might have been able to achieve it at some point in history, but, undoubtedly, it is now impossible. We must achieve a clear development strategy along with national unity. Unfortunately, the existing political tensions and the despair and doubt that govern the political climate of the country and are constantly conveyed to every member of the nation, along with the political pressures dominating the economic decisions, have severely diminished the climate for development. Our economic situation, all aspects of which are clear, with numbers and figures, dictates that we follow certain limited paths. Brotherly criticism is to help us pass through these paths more easily. And I, too, accompanying my support for its general directions, feel that I am responsible for it.

The representative from Kerman, addressing Mr. Hashemi, said: First, some ministers in your Cabinet lack the necessary ability and energy for the rapid actions that are necessary at this stage of the revolution. For this reason, the executive organizations are mainly blocking each other's way, and the necessary coordination does not exist among the organizations under your control. Second, with the present economic trend, during which you have omitted pricing from the duties of government in order to make the investments thrive and encourage production, unfortunately, given the uncontrolled hold over our economy by the trade sector and middlemen, the profiteers have found a good opportunity and are imposing intolerable pressures on the society through improper methods. The concern is that the producers, who are naturally under the influence of the middlemen, divert their efforts from production to unhealthy trade. There are many examples of this kind, especially in industry. A refrigerator requiring $110 in foreign currency and a cost of less than 14,000 tomans, a motorcycle requiring $100 in foreign currency and a cost of 60,000 tomans, and many other goods at more than double the cost of production, are sold on the market. If there is going to be modification, it means that domestic prices should be able to compete with global prices, rather than that the people have to pay for the accumulated losses and the losses due to mismanagement and cost overruns. Price control is an inevitable issue on which an urgent decision must be made to help national production. Of course, it is hoped that this will start from the roots and not the branches.

In conclusion, Mo'azenzadeh referred to the political currents in the country and pointed out:

Because of the global conditions, the climate of the region, the events of the past decade and the numerous

crises that exist around us as well as the economic and technological climate of the world, we are faced with serious developmental problems, on the one hand, and few opportunities, on the other. We need national unity and the national will to achieve economic development, resist global oppression and overcome actual crises. What the political factions must know is that, gentlemen in the right faction, an open economic climate is impossible without an open political climate. Such interpretations of the Constitution, threatening the people's freedom, pressures to eliminate the opposing faction from the political scene of the country, distrust of the masses and such actions that end in stifling the political environment of the country are seriously contrary to the creation of an open economic climate. In a word, those people will enter the arena of production and construction of the country who feel political and social dignity and know that their votes will be counted. Gentlemen of the left faction, I ask you, is an open political climate possible without an open economic climate? [passage omitted on Deputy Speaker Hashemian's speech on the occasion of Government Week]

Ratifications

The first item on the agenda of the open session of the Majles yesterday was the continuation of the examination of the report on the second round of discussions of the bill on the bylaws of the industrialized farm company of Martyr Beheshti, of which Articles 12-26 were ratified by the representatives. [passage omitted on ratifications]

27 Aug

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[Excerpt] Report on Yesterday's Open Session of the Majles

Legislative and Parliamentary Division—The open session of the Majles was held yesterday morning and was chaired by Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemiyan. Following remarks by the deputies from Rasht, Lahijan, Birjand and Nahbandan, the Majles went into session.

Below is a report filed by RESALAT's parliamentary correspondent on yesterday's open session of the Majles for the attention of our esteemed readers.

Mohammad Baqer Nowbakht, Deputy From Rasht

It is expected of the respected heads of factions that they keep in mind the current sensitive situation and the Imam's practice of providing practical support to the government and that they increase their efforts to mobilize the people rather than provoke them.

The first speaker was Mohammad Baqer Nowbakht, the deputy from Rasht. At the start of his speech he commented on Government Week and recalled martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar. He then commented on the past two years of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's government, saying: With regard to the people we must say that they expect, after years of resistance and tolerance, giving up their lives and property and all their sacrifice for Islam, that some of their economic and social problems be resolved so that they can enjoy some degree of comfort. They want to live in a politically healthy atmosphere where their dignity abroad is preserved by effective government policies. But the government of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, which was installed two years ago with the support of the people, has always faced many problems.

He said that these problems stem directly from the 30,000 billion rials damage caused by the war, the severe shortage of hard currency, a budget deficit of 2,146 billion rials, a 70-percent recession in industry, and other factors. He said: Since inflation is regarded as one of the main economic ills of society, the government's specific policies dictate that, on the one hand, to reduce spending, some of the work be handed over to the private sector, that goods and services be priced according to their cost, and that there should even be a change in the rationing system and subsidies for people with lower incomes. On the other hand, government needs to cut its spending and to charge more appropriate taxes and sell its oil to other countries at a higher price so as to increase its revenue. It should also increase production. The government is determined and committed to implementing the five-year plan. Although plentiful supplies of goods that the people need are not available to them at a reasonable price, and ultimately there are no creature comforts yet in the situation that we have described, the government nevertheless has managed in these last two years to prevent the continuation of unsound economic trends and has improved the economy in general.

The negative direction of the economy is now reversing toward growth. Figures indicate that at the beginning of 1991 the government's income enjoyed an unprecedented growth of 77.4 percent to more than 5.6 billion rials, which is 39.2 percent higher than what was even forecast in the five-year plan. Oil revenues have reached about $15 billion, which shows a growth of 25.1 percent as compared to the previous year. The budget deficit has been reduced from 2,146 billion rials to about 600 billion rials. Unfortunately, because of the unhealthy financial atmosphere, the effects of psychological aspects, and middlemen, this economic growth has not shown an effective result in all cases. Nonetheless, the fact is that the previous trend has changed and all these other indicators are considered to be a relative and valuable victory for the government.

Nowbakht added: In the field of foreign policy, developments have been such that in the Persian Gulf crisis and even after Iran has been mentioned as a country that counts in the region. Other countries have shown an inclination to maintain relations with us. At the same time, we still stress the need to safeguard our Islamic and revolutionary principles. One clear example of this was our support for Palestine and our proud presence at the hajj this year. This clearly indicates that Iran's victory

has in fact been viewed as having safeguarded the people's dignity abroad, which is expected by the people.

The speaker continued his speech by describing the government's overall activity as successful. He said that, for the reasons mentioned below, it is a national and religious duty to cooperate and coordinate with the government of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani:

1. This government is faithful to the principles and values for which we have strived so far, the same ones that the Imam used to stress. So much so that the great Leader [Khamene'i] also supports this government.

2. The realistic understanding that the head of the government has of our esteemed and dignified people.

3. The linkage between the success of the regime with that of the government under present conditions.

4. Sacrifice and investment, the revolutionary background, and the combatant nature that Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani has shown to save Islamic Iran, as a true and brave son of this country, at this time in history, point to the fact that, rather than keep his own position at the expense of the survival of the regime, he has risked his own position for the sake of the regime.

In connection with the factions that exist in the country, he said: Among the respected heads of political factions there are revolutionary and prominent figures of the regime. It is expected that they consider the current sensitive situation and go the same path as our departed Imam, who always supported the governments of the time so that they would try harder. The prime example of this was his continued fondness for the respected and hard-working government of engineer Musavi. In his practical support for the government, the Imam thus prevented tension and urged the people to mobilize even more.

In another part of his speech the deputy from Rasht talked about economic balance, and made the following suggestions in this regard:

1. According to Article 4 of the general policies of the first five-year plan, the government is allowed to change gradually the rationing system for food and necessary goods. But, keeping in mind the fact that the necessary conditions for this change do not exist, the rationing system should be maintained. Also, since the number of lower income people in society is high, the subsidies on food and other essentials should be paid as before.

2. We should note that the cult of maximum profit-seeking exists among some traders and the psychological effects of rising prices overshadow positive economic moves. Therefore, it is necessary to have organized and constant price monitoring by the government, not just in the short term.

3. With regard to housing, it must be noted that, alongside food and essential items, this has an effective role on the lives of the people, and there are more than 1.15 million people who are deprived of this. Regarding the housing units and apartments, which are being constructed by the public or private sectors or by cooperatives, Note 11 of the first five-year plan should be implemented and something suitable should be done, if it is in the general interest. In the present situation some landlords use their lease contract as an excuse either to order the evacuation of their property or to raise rent much more than the current rate of inflation. Thus the tenants, who are usually people on lower incomes with fixed wages, have nowhere to turn. I suggest that at least for a period of five to seven years, according to needs, there be no eviction orders from courts, except in special cases where the landlord is insolvent. In this regard, the Majles, which has always supported the oppressed, can pass a bill to prevent this worrying trend from continuing. [passage omitted on problems in Gilan Province]

Kamel Kheyrkhah, Deputy From Lahijan

The path that the government has chosen matches the five-year plan and the bills passed by the Majles.

Kamel Kheyrkhah, deputy from Lahijan, was the second pre-agenda speaker, who in his speech commemorated Government Week. He thanked the great Leader for traveling to Lorestan Province and asked the Leader to travel to Gilan Province and the deprived area of Lahijan.

He said: The Palestinian revolt, this historic action, is the direct result of dozens of years of the Palestinian people's innocence and oppression. The Muslims of the world, and especially those of this region, will never make peace with occupying Israel.

Kheyrkhah added: Islamic Iran will remain the champion of this constant struggle against Zionism, supporter of the Palestinian revolt and the Palestinian fighters. Based on this principle, the Majles passed a bill for the formation of a committee to support the people of Palestine.

In another part of his speech Kamel Kheyrkhah said that the guidelines of the great Leader and his directives set society and the Islamic ummah on a path along which they must complete their growth. He added: The extremely important statements of the great Leader at his meeting with officials of the regime were warning bells, as well as solutions to issues. It was a warning for us to note that the enemy is strong and serious about destroying the Islamic revolution, creating dissent among the ranks of Muslims. It presented solutions because it revealed the secret of victory over the enemy. It is hoped that the officials of the holy regime, religious authorities, and clerics—especially the respected Friday prayer leaders—heed and implement the enlightening guidelines of the Leader, with all their hearts and souls.

He then commented on the policies and actions of the government and said: The government of brother Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemi-Rafsanjani faces postwar problems,

including the cost of reconstruction in war-torn areas, the closure of industrial and production units, followed by high prices in the shops for people's everyday needs. But the truth is that official figures show that many of the basic and strategic goods such as metals, pipes, textiles, and aluminium are more plentiful now and cheaper than before. The government must, however, make efforts to increase the output of goods and to bring prices down so that the load of high prices is lifted from the people's shoulders. The path chosen by the government and the policies of the respected president, as head of the executive power, match the goals set out by the five-year plan and the bills passed by the Majles. The people of Iran, with their iron determination, will walk alongside the government and will set present problems aside. Even now we are seeing reconstruction in war-torn regions and the areas hit by earthquakes. In Government Week we are seeing the inauguration of projects and results of development plans in most of the towns of our Islamic homeland.

He then talked about tea and rice imports and said: At the moment the rice has just been harvested, but our rice farmers are worried about prices. When we consider the cost of labor, without a doubt rice-growing will mean huge losses for our farmers. The government must now stop the rice rationing coupons and prevent rice imports so that the farmers can sell their produce at a decent price. Fortunately, last year the government paid attention to these issues and heeded our advice. As a result the rice farmers were able to offer their produce on the market at a decent price. We expect that in the current year the previous year's methods will again be used so that villagers will be able to stay solvent in the face of rising prices. With regard to tea I must say that as a result of continued efforts by the group of Majles deputies from Gilan province, their presence at the economic council, and with the cooperation and supreme effort of the respected president, a sum was added to the price of fresh green tea leaves. In return, our grateful tea growers made such an effort and handed over to the factories green leaves of such quality that, according to the tea experts, this year's tea harvest is of a superior quality to foreign tea. Therefore the economic council must start thinking about increasing the price of fresh green tea leaves. The tea organization should also try to improve its relations with tea growers and the managers of tea factories. They should stay away from issues that have nothing to do with them and they should prevent the effects of certain people's interference in the region.

The deputy from Lahijan concluded by criticizing the actions of the officials concerning the rising waters in the Caspian Sea, the severe shortage of fuel and building materials, and the distribution of budget allocations in the province.

Abol Hasan Ha'erizadeh, Deputy From Birjand and Nahbandan

I, as a deputy of the Majles, officials of all three powers, and Friday prayer leaders in some towns are all being called upon by the Leader to avoid extravagant living.

The last pre-agenda speaker was Abol Hasan Ha'erizadeh from the constituency of Birjand and Nahbandan.

He said: It has been nearly two and a half years since the passage of the legislation dealing with the first five-year plan. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the esteemed president, the esteemed ministers of government, and most officials in the country from the executive, legislative, and judicial powers all make a lot of effort, but the methods must be corrected.

Majles deputies, mostly out of sympathy and dedication, criticized the methods of responsible officials in the executive and judicial powers as well as in the Majles and its committees. These are mostly out of sympathy and because they mean well.

It is said that instead of criticism, there should be solutions. As a deputy, I neither have experts at my command nor have the systems, the tools, or the organizations available to me so that I could analyze the situation and offer expert solutions.

The deputy from Birjand continued: The esteemed government, in implementing Note 30 regarding analysis and determining a consumer spending model, has acted in a most inappropriate manner. Consumer trends have been handled very weakly. The esteemed president is head of the council in charge of making plans regarding consumer spending model.

He continued: Consumer spending model include [such things as] a minimum of available, inexpensive, decent clothing for the people and taxing the very rich.

With regard to the implementation of justice, the speaker said: The implementation of justice means that those who accumulate wealth must be brought under control. Justice means not catering to the rich and bringing to account those who rob the people.

Mr. Ha'erizadeh spoke next about solutions, and said: One solution is to investigate the billions which have been plundered by those people, by those billionares who during the war, during the time that the people made their sacrifices, made their billions in the bazaar, in the companies and elsewhere. At that time the fighters sacrificed and these people hoarded and looted.

The speaker talked about obtaining taxes from guilds and said: Every Islamic association in a guild, every guild council, and every union—which, despite, the orders of the great Leader, do not help the government in the collection of taxes, enforcement of fair trade, control of prices, and the correct distribution of goods, must be closed down and elections to the guild must be held again.

The speaker said that various organizations had acted weakly and in an improper manner regarding Notes 2, 5, and 6 of the five-year plan. He then talked about the actions of the ministry of finance in connection with tax collection and said: The respected ministry of finance has acted in a proper manner, collecting taxes from some

rich elements; this is praiseworthy, but not enough on a national scale. Actions must be corrected quickly and proper help must be given to the government.

He commented on the valuable speech given by the great Leader regarding a brotherhood of unity among the factions, and said this was worth thinking about, though unfortunately some newspapers analyzed in an unbalanced and self-centered way.

He talked about the remarks made by the great leader about the need to eliminate extravagant living, and said: In that worthy statement he made some comments about the need to eliminate extravagance and luxury. There were guidelines for officials of the regime to live a simple life which should be remembered. Organizations and bodies should not spend a great deal of money on trips, seminars, and so forth, and as much as possible they should not take their guests to luxury hotels.

We are all being addressed here—me as deputy of the Majles, officials, the respected Friday prayer leaders in some towns, and respected officials of the three powers, wherever they may be. It is against the religion to build houses, expand offices, and so forth out of public funds. Simple living standards at the top must be used as examples by those lower down the ladder. This worthy speech will be kept as a historic document. There is no need to have a law for this. The issue is so clear that even a simple person is able to understand it. The people cannot be fooled. This is something that everyone must act on since it is an order from the Leader.

He commented on government moves to stop migration into cities, saying this was praiseworthy. Regarding actions by municipal offices, including the Tehran municipality, he said: The brave actions of the mayor of Tehran are praiseworthy. On the other hand, other organizations such as the judiciary and intelligence should all help to destroy those main elements who steal land, profiteers, middlemen, and those who build shanty towns. The rapid introduction of a two-line bus service and changing some of the streets are also praiseworthy and deserve our thanks. The mayor of Tehran bravely implements development projects. If he collects taxes from some shopping centers and traders who make millions, that is also good; he should take more and should have taken sooner. Some of the billionaire gentlemen in the bazaar have been wounded. The multitude of attacks against the municipalities are actions against the government.

The deputy from Birjand said: The brave moves by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani in some of his economic changes are praiseworthy and valuable. But the government must watch carefully over those parts of the five-year plan that have not been implemented.

Mr. Ha'erizadeh continued: Those who hold power in the judicial and executive branches should note that security in investment will come about only when there is security in thought and politics. If with every sentence that I utter they broadcast a thousand night letters full of nonsense against me, tongues will be silenced. If a Majles deputy says something and is then threatened, the shouts will turn to silence.

Each time there is an ugly confrontation with officials who have served the Islamic ummah in the government during the war years and the years at the beginning, able men are removed from the scene. That way the brains and the investment that have left the country will never find it secure enough to return home. There are some who should stop these character assassinations and have mercy on those who have served the people and the revolution. Those who have unclean pens should break those pens and correct themselves. They should not stab the Imam's friends in the back or the front.

Ha'erizadeh talked about mobilizing the armed forces for reconstruction and said: Mobilizing the armed forces for reconstruction and the implementation of Note 9 have been very weak. The armed forces must be used in development projects in the country. Who will have a reply to such shortcomings?

He said that President Hashemi-Rafsanjani has the courage to confront, and added: We must help his government in its effort to change the executive mechanisms so that they become the powerful arms of the government. Managing during a crisis is very difficult indeed.

In this regard the speaker identified the governor general of Khorasan province as a good manager and thanked him for his efforts.

He concluded: Traffic fines were increased so as to create more order in the cities. This was done with government approval, but they should not have written an underlying attack against the Majles.

Ratifications

The first item on the agenda of yesterday's open Majles session was a first priority item to give permission to increase the Islamic Republic of Iran's investment in the international finance company linked to the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development-,Tarmim and Tose'eh Bank which was approved and passed.

According to this bill, the government is allowed to increase Iran's share in the international finance company linked to the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, Tarmim and Tose'eh Bank from 372 shares to 816.

The second item on the agenda was permission to increase the Islamic Republic's investment in the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development. This was a first priority item which was passed.

In accordance with this law the government is allowed to to increase the investment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the International Bank of Recontruction and

Development up to a level of 2.368 billion rials with 600,000 Special Drawing Rights, or SDR.

The third item on the agenda was the report from the personnel and administrative committee on a "coordinated method of payment."

Following comments by the rapporteur of the committee in giving details about the mentioned plan, Messrs. Ha'erizadeh and Pur-Hoseyni spoke against the plan, and Owfi-zadeh spoke for it. The rest of the discussion was postponed until today's open session.

'Isa Vela'i Queries the Minister of Commerce

The Majles session continued with a query by 'Isa Vela'i, deputy from Tehran, to the minister of commerce.

He read the text of his inquiry as follows:

1. Since it is illegal for the leadership of the distribution service guilds to operate in Tehran, what actions have you taken in this regard?

2. According to Article 32 of the charter governing the laws of guilds, approved by the supervisory council, the vote of the supervisory committee is final and must be carried out. Why, then, has there been no new election to choose the leadership of the distribution services guilds in Tehran?

Then Vahaji, the minister of commerce, started his reply by saying: Following elections, there were complaints from some members of the unions, which were passed to the supervisory committee. It was announced, after consideration, that the elections would be considered void and the report was handed over to the committee of the supreme supervisory council. This committee on 31/2/70 [21 May 1991] received the report and declared the elections void. After the members of the committee (representatives of 10 ministers) agreed unanimously that the elections should be considered null and void, this decision was reported to the body dealing with guilds affairs.

At the same time there was a communication between the guilds body and the president of the Republic. On behalf of the respected president, a letter was sent to the ministry of commerce asking that further elections be canceled. After the presidential orders were sent to the ministry of commerce, we canceled the elections and sent a report to the president regarding the manner in which the elections were declared null and void. We still await a reply in this regard from the respected president so that we can decide what to do next.

Then 'Isa Vela'i once again started to speak and said: Even though Mr. Vahaji said nothing about why these elections were scrapped, we must keep in mind that the supervisory committee is made up of 10 representatives of ministers who decided unanimously to declare the elections null and void, and Article 12 of the charter is quite clear that the vote of the supervisory committee is final and must be carried out. If you are asked to halt the elections, while this request is illegal, why is it that after three months the elections have still not been held? And now during these three months while the leadership of the distribution and services guild in Tehran has been carrying on with its duties, their actions are all illegal. If the president wrote to you and asked you to halt the elections, his request was illegal. You have a duty to uphold the law, therefore it is your duty to hold the elections. Should they not have told you the results? Why were they stopped? What did you do in the face of this illegal request?

Then Vahaji replied to Vela'i's remarks and said: We work in an organization which must keep its cohesion at all times. If there are differences of opinion or, as Vela'i claims, even if there is an illegal order, it has to be carried out. We agree that the elections should be held again, and we also agree that those other elections were null and void. This is what we believe. But we work in a family where the views of the father of the family have to be obeyed. You will agree that if I were to go against the wishes of the respected President, this could have adverse affects on my executive duties.

We are waiting for an explanation from our brothers in the legal department at the president's office, and our representatives have gathered reports from this group. There is nothing we can do about the fact that this matter has taken so long. But what I must say is that when we say that the elections are null and void, the incumbent leadership group carries on with its duties.

Vahaji concluded: This process will come to a conclusion soon.

It is worth noting that at the end Vela'i said if he referred the question to the committee dealing with these matters, Mr. Vahaji would still have the same replies, so he would not refer the question to that committee on condition that the gentlemen resolve the problem in the next few months.

Mr. Vela'i had presented the same question to the Majles commerce committee before and had received the same reply. But then he asked the Majles leadership to raise the question during an open session.

Deputy From Shahriyar and Robati Karim Queries the Minister of Commerce

The session continued with an inquiry by Ahmad Mahmud Robati to Vahaji.

Robati posed his question in this way:

1. Despite the views of the commerce committee and the views of the legal department at the President's office regarding the illegality of the elections to the Tehran chamber of commerce, industry, and mines, on what authority has the new leadership committee started its activities?

2. Based on what law were the elections held for the provincial chambers of commerce and the leadership of the Iranian chamber?

3. What has the Ministry of Commerce done with regard to these violations?

Vahaji replied to the questions posed by Robati: In general the new law dealing with the Chamber of Commerce was passed by the Majles on 15/12/69 [5 February 1991]. Before that date we had ordered the chamber to hold elections which were held on 25/12/69, whereas the Majles bill was not handed down to us until 21/1/70 [10 April 1991].

The elections were held on 25/12/69. Those who were elected asked in Ordibehesht [April-May] for representatives to go there from the ministries of commerce, industries, mines, and heavy industries so that leadership elections could be held. Amid all this we were having doubts as to whether or not the leadership could hold elections. We asked the president's deputy in charge of legal affairs and the commerce committee at the Majles if the elections would be in line with the law that had recently been passed. Both sources declared that such elections would be illegal. We informed the chamber of commerce. The chamber then asked the legal services division of the president's office if their elections were legal, and the answer was affirmative. Following this reply, the matter was taken to Mr. Habibi and in the second letter that the president's deputy in charge of legal affairs sent to us, the elections for the Tehran chamber and the elections for the leadership council of the Tehran chamber were both approved.

From then on, in reality we considered this second letter to be a seal of approval for the elections to the leadership council of the Tehran chamber, and it was also accepted by us. After this move, the Iranian chamber of commerce, industry, and mines started elections. These were held for the leadership of this chamber on 22/4/70 [13 July 1991]. For us it was clear that after the reply given by the president's deputy in charge of legal affairs—which said that 15 days after the law came into effect, all elections would be illegal—we did not send our representative to take part in the elections for the leadership of the chamber. There was a second exchange of correspondence asking why the Ministry of Commerce had not taken part in elections for the leadership of the Iranian chamber. We gave the necessary reply to the respected president and his deputy for legal affairs. We received a reply to the effect that the elections for the leadership council of the Iranian chamber were against the law and we reported the same thing to the chamber itself.

In the second half of his speech, Robati then said: We do not know what has happened now that the office of international legal services, whose work involves something entirely different, has become involved here and has given an opinion.

He added: Even if we accept the view of the international legal services bureau at the president's office that the elections for the Tehran chamber were held before approval by the Council of Guardians, and that the elections for the leadership of the Iranian chamber on 22/4/70 [13 July 1991] were held two months after the law had come into effect, our main argument is that if these are against the law, on what authority are these chambers remaining active? On what authority are they traveling abroad to take part in meetings, sessions and deals? Who is going to give an answer? Who has to discuss such issues? We are acting in accordance with our legal and religious duties.

It is worth noting that Robati concluded by announcing that he was not satisfied with the replies given by the minister, so the question was passed to the committee that deals with questions in the Majles.

On the Peripheries of the Majles

Mr. Ha'erizadeh, the deputy from Birjand, spoke in opposition to the bill to coordinate payments. He said:

An effort to coordinate payments before the necessary changes in the administrative system would deliver a blow to the administrative system. What use is a coordinated pay policy in an administrative system that is without substance? First, there must be the necessary changes in the administrative system, then there should be discussion on coordinated pay. Today, we must give a free hand to officials. At the moment our management is a management in crisis, and that is like management in war. Management in crisis must have power to maneuver. If you accept the ministers and the governors general, give them the power to give higher pay to able employees, and to deal with those who are not.

Mr. 'Avaz-zadeh, the deputy from Shirvan, spoke in favor of the bill to coordinate payment. He said:

When proposals such as the one to coordinate payment are not brought into the Majles, people like Mr. Ha'erizadeh bring the government under question and ask why they do not bring any bills into the Majles. They bring the government under question every day in various places. When the government and the Majles decide that they will review the bill, this same Mr. Ha'erizadeh comes and opposes it. In accordance with the five-year plan we had asked the government to present a bill to coordinate payment, and now the government has carried out its duty. This bill has been presented in order to correct the administrative machinery.

*** 28 Aug**

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[Excerpts] Report on Yesterday's Open Session of the Majles

Legislative and Parliamentary Division—The Majles met in public session yesterday morning chaired by

Hojjat ol-Eslam Hashemian. Following statements by the deputies from Bakhtaran, Delfan va al-Shatr, and Tehran, the Majles went into session, and the government employee payment bill was approved in general.

Printed below is the report from the RESALAT's correspondent on yesterday's public Majles session.

Sayyed Jalil Sayyedzadeh, Deputy From Bakhtaran

The first pre-agenda speaker was Sayyed Jalil Sayyedzadeh, the deputy from Bakhtaran. He commemorated Government Week and the memory of martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar, and reviewed the government's accomplishments:

It must be acknowledged that, through effort and struggle, reliance on God and the guidance of the exalted Leader [Khamene'i] and through coordination and solidarity, the government of Mr. Hashemi Rafsanjani has come a long way in two years. It has put the rusty wheels of the nation's economy into motion and has put in order the government's unfortunate financial situation, with its backbreaking budget deficit. It has brought about a new procedure in the analyses of foreigners seeking to understand the nation of Iran and the sacred aspirations of the Islamic revolution. The tasks completed by the ministry of foreign affairs in the areas of comprehensive production, the nation's industries and communications, the reconstruction of refineries and putting them into operation, possible activities in petrochemical matters, the natural gas delivery network, revitalizing historical issues in connection with the nation's art and literature, and creating a suitable climate for discussing the quantity and quality of physical education are commendable. Most important of all is the peace of mind and security that prevails throughout this nation among men and women, old and young, and rural and urban dwellers, which is in itself a distinct victory and a gift from God. In this sense one must be ever grateful.

He then added: With all its power, experience, and devotion, the government has traversed this difficult path, and has begun its efforts to reform and build the economic foundation, which was suffering from chronic disruption and abnormal condition. This is not concealed from the sharp eyes of experts in economic affairs, both those who fairly acknowledge it and those who tendentiously deny it. The government's general programs have been approved by most of the experts. Naturally, concerning the details, there are views that can be put forward and constructive criticism and methods that can be proposed, which in themselves will strengthen the government.

At some point the speaker said:

1. The evaluation of the work of the Strategic Studies Department that has been established in Iran for the first time to undertake a comprehensive planning and general guidance for society and the government towards national and Islamic goals, has not yet been explained to the people and the deputies. This Department must create a nourishing climate for the government domestically and abroad. More important, efforts must be made to find solutions and values that are far from ideological struggles and factionalism and are on the path of the Islamic revolution and under the guidance of the exalted Leader.

2. Clearly, unified direction and simple living on the part of the officials and sound and constructive approaches by them, will make bearable the unavoidable economic pressures in the reconstruction period. Raising the prices of goods and services is beneficial when people are assured that the money will not be used to decorate the office of some official, to change the decor, or to compete in the formalities of some office.

3. It is necessary to preserve the morale of the public and to show respect, and all officials are expected to observe this. God forbid that this divine formula, this beautiful experiment, which is expressed by a unified public presence at many ceremonies and demonstrations, should be defeated by unnecessary pressures on the people and haughtiness towards them for the sake of grading a road or building a boulevard. Such a thing could ultimately cause irreparable damage.

4. The appearance of strains of bribery and the presence of prostitution, laziness, and waste of public funds, which sometimes conceals itself in the black market, is eating away at the tree of the revolution like a termite, and it must be dealt with decisively.

The Bakhtaran deputy continued by discussing the problems in his electoral district. He described the sacrifices of the people during the imposed war and the political and geographic situation in the province. He added: These valiant people endured aerial bombardments by enemy aircraft, made their way with bare feet through the plains, the deserts, and the mountains and suffered from hunger and thirst. They did not abandon their mission, however, and they did not make the least effort to make the enemies of Islam and the revolution happy. After the war, however, it was expected that in the shadow of all this sacrifice, after all those reminders and letters, more would be done and its benefit in quantity and quality would become clearer.

Pointing to some of the resources and talents in the province, he said: Is it not oppression when people who live under such conditions should be deprived of major investments? I have said repeatedly that the strongest managers should be appointed in the border areas that are experiencing such conditions. Why is this being disregarded? Why are the interests of these people sacrificed because of defective political analyses and self-centered activity? This is a point that the respected minister of the interior must answer. Why are things being done without making use of the existing potential? Why is there no attention paid to the views, proposals, and criticisms of the deputies, who are all dissatisfied with the existing situation? This is a question they must answer.

He emphasized: Such things will certainly have undesirable effects and consequences, and the government's extensive efforts will yield bitter fruits. It is hoped that the minister of the interior will reassess his methods, that he will seek to please the public and redress the past.

He thanked the minister of power, the minister of health care and treatment and the Environmental Quality Organization for their efforts in dealing with water pollution in Bakhtaran. He then noted: We expect more than this. With this compassion and this full discretion, which has been delegated by the respected president of the republic, why should there not be greater haste in this matter? Is the pollution of drinking water a simple matter, and with all that spread of contagious disease, and in the summer yet? If it had been our own wives and children in that place and under those conditions experiencing the discomforts and hearing the cries of the sick children in the hospitals and the homes, would those same conditions still exist? I am certain that the problem would have been solved sooner and there would have been no need for all these reminders and letters. It is therefore expected that the problem be solved decisively as a matter of national resolve, through personal involvement, follow through, and by employing every effective factor.

Sayyedzadeh also thanked the minister of education and training for the worthy and suitable appointment of the general manager of Bakhtaran, he thanked Engineer Shafti for increasing the flights to Bakhtaran, and the minister of petroleum for beginning the task of natural gas delivery in the area, and he reminded the minister of petroleum stating that with the onset of winter, planning must be done concerning the matter of fuel.

Masha'allah Heydari-Moqadam, Deputy From Selseleh va Delfan

Masha'allah Heydari-Moqadam, Selseleh va Delfan va al-Shatr deputy, was the second pre-agenda speaker. At the beginning of his talk he discussed the blessed journey by the exalted Leader to the Province of Lorestan. [passage omitted praising Khamene'i's visit to Lorestan Province]

He then commemorated Government Week and recalled the memories of martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar. He declared his decisive support for the serving government of Mr. Hashemi Rafsanjani, this esteemed, peerless, and prominent figure in the world of Islam, who wills all of his ability in service to the Islamic government and to solving the economic, cultural, and political problems of Islam. He expressed the hope that the nation and officials will do more to preserve the government, unity, and harmony.

The speaker also noted: His Holiness the Imam said repeatedly that the highest obligation is to preserve the basis of the system, and this is one of the main foundations of the true and serving government of Mr. Hashemi Rafsanjani, someone who is one of the treasures of the Islamic revolution who suffered under the monarchy, was a companion and friend of the Imam, and has come into the arena with all of his being. If His Holiness the Imam were still bound to this life, he would certainly and in the most straightforward way have supported him vigorously. Moreover, even now his government is confirmed by the wise Leader of the world of Islam, His Holiness Ayatollah Khamene'i, and therefore the proof is complete for everyone.

Heydari-Moqadam said at some point: Because all the nation's forces and official organizations of the government are related to each other, an effort must be made to take sincere steps, observing piety and with constructive and helpful criticism, responsibly and without upsetting public opinion and making the enemies of the government happy, to reform and strengthen these foundations of the government. We must all try to adopt the path of the prophets, the saints and His Holiness the Imam, which is purification of the soul from ambition, anger, grudges, and jealousy, and we must not forget the words of His Holiness the Imam (peace be upon him), who said "love of this world is the root of all evil." Let us remember that that holy man said: "If this globe were filled with prophets, there would be no more disputes." Therefore, for the sake of the blood of the martyrs, let us revise and deepen a little our thoughts, actions and behavior, and if our differences arise from base and worldly tendencies, opportunism and striving for power, let us nip them in the bud and keep them in check, and let us remember that the Islamic government is the essential product of years of toil and struggle by the prophets, the imams and the men and women of God, and so much blood has been shed so far to maintain it; so much suffering, hardship and imprisonment has been endured by the crusaders on the path of God. In particular, we all know that the Islamic government is still endangered and threatened by repeated and various plots and tricks by the world of infidelity and imperialism, and it is no longer acceptable for us to cut off its roots. It is therefore necessary to thwart the plots and evil wishes of the enemies of Islam and the government, and by following and obeying the guardian of the Muslim Cause, His Holiness Ayatollah Khamene'i (may God grant him a long life), strengthening the government and governmental organizations and combined with effort, work, sincerity, trustworthyness, expertise, and commitment to building the country, we must take the greatest strides possible to create an exemplary and model society, full of purity, sincerity, and Islamic justice for the world of Islam and humanity.

He went on to call upon the martyr-nurturing nation of Iran not to give up the fruits of 13 years of effort, assistance, captivity, sacrifice, and expenditure of the life and treasure of its dear ones.

He added: Be assured that with the existence of such a worthy Leader and such a compassionate and pious president and politician, with the help of God we will overcome and put behind us the problems that arise from the oppressive monarchy and the enormous losses caused by the imposed war and the economic embargo.

The Sebzeh va Delfan deputy observed that all offices and organizations must try to abide by the law. He said:

In view of the notes to Article 100 of the Municipalities Law and the amendments to them made by the Revolutionary Council, and in view of the fact that monitoring public violations is a responsibility of the municipalities, it is no longer appropriate, without observing the aforementioned regulations, that the municipalities should also legislate and create fines to be paid by people. Of course I thank the respected mayor of Tehran for serious efforts made in other areas.

He called upon the exalted ministers, when sending out inspectors and honest administrative and financial experts, to exercise constant control and supervision over their organizations to prevent embezzlement, bribery, and abandonment of the public.

Hosein Mozafari-Nejad, Deputy From Tehran

The final pre-agenda speaker was Hosein Mozafari-Nejad, from the Tehran electoral district.

He commemorated the anniversary of the oppressive martyrdom of martyrs Raja'i and Bahonar and said:

Raja'i and Bahonar found their ways to the presidency and the prime ministership through the heart of the nation, and they expressed the highest respect and reverence for the Majles.

Mozafari-Nejad read a highlight from the Imam's guidance concerning the characteristics of the Majles deputies. He said: In this regard the Imam did not overlook the slightest detail or criterion. Therefore, the respected Council of Guardians, 11 years after the Majles was formed, has recently expressed an opinion concerning Article 99 of the Constitution, and has decided that its supervision of the Majles elections is proper. First of all, in view of the fact that the Council has already approved the Majles Election Law, and second, based on the tradition that was practiced during the three Majles terms when His Holiness the Imam attended and supervised, and third, in view of the fact that His Holiness the Imam explained quite clearly the characteristics of Americanized Islam and the Islam of Mohammad (peace be upon him), the best thing is to do what was done during the time of the Imam, and this in itself will bring about unity in society and the active presence of the public in public affairs, and it will avoid a nonpeople's Majles.

Elsewhere in his talk, Mozafari-Nejad said: Raja'i and Bahonar were models of plain living for public leaders. Martyr Raja'i gave a speech in a city he was visiting, and then he went to a designated place to have lunch. There was a large table with two or three kinds of food and drink, and no matter how much they insisted he did not touch the food. With a crestfallen expression on his face, he said: Are those to whom I spoke now sitting at this same kind of table? "You who believe, why do you preach something you are not practicing?" [Koran 61:2] Yet recently, several days before visiting a mining company at a provincial center about two hours from Tehran, a minister sent a special cooking team from Tehran and they had lunch at a sumptuous table with various kinds of food costing 200,000 tomans and then left, but from that very moment, based on the newsletter from one of the ministries, they left a bad impression on many of the people witnessing from the sidelines.

In that same regard he added: They asked Martyr Raja'i repeatedly for permission to change the carpet in his workplace, and he did not allow it. One day when he was not at the office, one of the brothers made arrangements to change the carpet and laid a new carpet in his office. When Martyr Raja'i came into the room and saw the new carpet, he did not hesitate to call that brother official: "Have they gotten new carpets in the homes in the south of the city and in the villages, that you have done this?" He then asked how much it had cost. They said 2,000 tomans. He turned to that brother and said: At the end of the month take 1,000 tomans out of my salary and 1,000 tomans out of yours and deposit it into the government's account, so you do not forget to preserve the public treasury. In recent months in some ministries, however, in buildings that were themselves strong and ornate, they spent millions of tomans to change the decor on the minister's floor, tare down strong walls and replaced them with crystal glass walls. Returning from a mission outside the country, Martyr Raja'i bought three kg of fruit and took it home and said: Since they like gifts brought back from trips, I did not want to go home emptyhanded.

Perhaps these days the idea of scenes like this may seem like a legend. For some, it may even be difficult to hear and believe, but those who were with him and served him saw with their own surprised eyes. "Learn a lesson, you who have any insight." [Koran 59:2]

He added: Praise God, the matter of love of luxury was raised as being contrary to [our] values, and was discussed on Press Day during Government Week. That day, when Sofian al-Thuri [an early Muslim jurisprudent] was discussed and some individuals sought to compare many of the simple-lifestyle believers with a deviant thinker like Sofian al-Thuri; and that day when it was said that Imam Sadeq, peace be upon him, wore underclothing as soft as the thin layer covering the egg yolks; that day when it was said that several hundred single men were among the companions of Safah and that the Prophet stayed every night at one of the nine chambers; that day when compassionate, forward-looking people, including the suffering and inquisitive representatives of the government, said that discussing such issues for a revolutionary society after eight years of war and economic embargo and making promises and issuing threats have created problems, the same individuals immediately called them members of the neq party [people who nag all the time] and said that some people want to tear down every place so they can sit in the ruins and hoot like owls. But the children of the revolution took all this sarcasm to heart and made no kind of

self-defense because of the need to preserve values. Now, in recent days and weeks executive officials hold one press conference after another presenting their problems, programs, and services and calling on the people to endure the problems. Again, today, as the eyes, ears, and voices of the people who elected them, and also as true sympathizers, these same deputies are saying that the people, especially the office employees, laborers, and farmer classes, in a word the oppressed people, are under backbreaking pressure from bone-crushing high prices, and that short-term and long-term basic solutions must be sought to save the people, and as always the Majles follows this path loyally, as it has enacted the strongest legislation on the government's plans, and the public is capable of assessing the worth of things. If the vast extent of the problems regarding inflation, lack of housing, high prices, and other pressures is reduced to a minimum, this in itself will speak positively for the government, otherwise, the mere suggestion, propaganda and cutting the inflation artificially in itself has negative effects, and God forbid it would lead to the idea that our public officials are living apart from us.

Mozafari-Nejad said: Simple living, especially on the part of executives, officials and their families, is the foundation of social justice in its practical meaning in society, and justice is the root of the government's preservation, and religion and ideology are actually evaluated in terms of justice.

He said: How can one accept that one person gets millions of dollars with a few minutes of dealing and talking on the telephone, while millions of human beings are deprived of the minimum necessities, or that one person might own tens and hundreds of homes, apartments and villas while millions of human beings are deprived of minimum shelter and housing and carry their belongings on their backs?

The speaker continued: In their talks, press conferences and reports, the nation's economic officials intentionally give the increase in gross domestic production as one of the indicators of economic prosperity and they report on controlling inflation and the volume of currency in circulation, and the abundance of goods, but behind the cover of statistics it never comes out that the purchasing power of most of the people remains low, and this reality tells us that before doing anything, and concurrent with other work, we must bring about social justice in the income distribution system.

He emphasized: Now that the leaders of the Soviet Union have not acted upon His Holiness the Imam's miraculous advice and have finally fallen into the laps of the West and America, and America is busy in the Soviet Union with land reform and land division, it is incumbent on foreign policy officials to observe the situation with vigilance, lest millions of Muslims fall into oppression again in the midst of this, and America's rancor towards Islam and the Muslim republics there should bear fruit.

Approval of the Uniform Government Employee Payment Bill

Consideration continued at yesterday's session of the Uniform Government Employee Payment Bill, and it was approved in its general form. Likewise, several recommendations were made concerning Article 1 of the bill, and their continued consideration was postponed until the next session.

Qasr-e Shirin's Deputy's Question to the Minister of Education and Training

The final item on the agenda was the question from Mohammad Hoseyn Jahangiri, Qasr-e Shirin deputy, to the minister of education and training.

Elaborating on his question, he said: Before the war, educational employees at Qasr-e Shirin received wages and benefits for border areas, but after the war they were forced to abandon their principal places of residence and to work in other municipalities, and doing this was not their own choice. Most of them are in Bakhteran and West Eslamabad, and under a decree issued by the Bakhteran Province General Office of Education and Training, the border wages and benefits must be paid to teachers and educators in Qasr-e Shirin, which unfortunately has not been paid, and the follow-ups have gone nowhere.

He added: In our correspondence, the Administrative and Employment Affairs Organization has announced that there is no problem with the payment of these benefits, but I do not know why this has not been done yet.

He added: The second question pertains to the visit by the minister to the offices of education and training and the emigrant student schools. The emigrants in the Municipality of Bakhteran are dispersed and the students have many problems concerning traveling. Mr. Najafi, the question is, why have you not visited this area even once to see and have contact with the situation since you took over the minister's post?

The third question has to do with the schools. In the Province of Bakhteran there are to be emigrant students, and we expected the minister to visit the emigrant students and to attend to affairs in the schools.

Then Najafi, minister of education and training, answered: What he says about the problems of educators in the war-stricken areas is undeniable, and I agree also that this should be handled within the framework of the regulations, rights and laws that pertain to them, but the problem of teachers serving in Bakhteran after the war is not related to the ministry of education and training, because the government has a ruling that stipulates that upon being transferred to Bakhteran, these teachers will receive the employment benefits granted by that city. Of course it was the desire of the ministry of education and training to be able to pay the benefits for Qasr-e Shirin, but regulations do not permit us to do this.

He continued: Concerning the matter regarding the ignoring of students from Qasr-e Shirin in Bakhteran, it is fair to say that Bakhteran was one of the places where emigrant students received much attention, because the Bakhteran office of education and training even set up a separate building in Bakhteran to deal with Qasr-e Shirin's education and training, and it gave even more attention to them in terms of the numbers of teachers and students.

In conclusion he said: I have not yet had the opportunity to visit there, because we have 500 educational areas, and clearly I cannot go to all of them, but concerning Qasr-e Shirin let me say that the ministry's deputy minister for development, who is responsible for reconstruction, has visited there three times, and I also accept his (Mr. Jahangiri's) invitation, and God willing during the coming academic year I will visit that area.

On the Peripheries of the Majles

Several times at yesterday's public Majles session consideration of the Uniform Government Employee Payment Bill was stopped because of the lack of a quorum.

The report from RESALAT's parliamentary correspondent on this session states that despite numerous and repeated reminders from the Majles leadership about the deputies not leaving the Majles, while a member of the Majles leadership stood in front of the front door to keep some of the deputies from leaving, a number of deputies, laughing and joking and saying they had something important to do, would leave the Majles chamber, effectively halting the work of the Majles.

This was so obvious yesterday that it even provoked protests from several of the deputies, because in each of these instances more than 170 deputies had to wait for a small handful of deputies.

This is at a time when following directives from His Holiness Ayatollah Khamene'i, the Leader of the Islamic revolution, concerning the prevention of love for luxury and eliminating unnecessary expenses, a bill on this very matter had been presented by a number of deputies, and its first priority status was approved. What must be noted in this connection is that when a small number of deputies leave the Majles during a public session to attend to other affairs, it will certainly affect the public treasury, because the Majles spends huge amounts from the Muslim public treasury to hold its sessions.

Yesterday, the minister of education and training, Dr. Najafi, came to the Majles to answer the questions from the Qasr-e Shirin deputy. Before the questions were asked, and during the discussion concering the Uniform Government Employee Payment Bill, a number of deputies gathered around Mr. Najafi. In the meantime, Mr. Bayat, the session's speaker, addressed that group of deputies saying: Gentlemen, go and sit in your places, the minister of education and training has come to the Majles to answer questions, not to deal with other issues. He said: We want to vote on this bill now, how are you going to participate in the voting in this manner?

Explanation From the Pharmaceutical Affairs Office at the Medical Center of the Martyr Foundation About the Fees for Medicine and Services Charged at the Khatam al-Nabiyin Hospital

After the Majles speech by Mr. Shafe'i, Marand deputy, was published in the newspaper on 5/31/1370 [22 August 1991] on the prices of medicine and services at the Khatam al-Nabiyin Hospital, which was delivered at the public Majles session of Wednesday 5/30/1370 [21 August 1991], the Pharmaceutical Affairs Office at the Medical Center of the Martyr Foundation sent us an explanation, which is printed below.

1. The price of drugs was the same in all the pharmacies, and this amount was set by the Pharmaceutical Affairs Office at the Ministry of Health Care, Treatment and Medical Education, and no pharmacy has the right to sell drugs at a price higher than the one written on the drug package.

2. The pharmacy at the Khatam al-Nabiyin Hospital and other pharmacies affiliated with the Medical Center of the Martyr Foundation have a contract with various organizations of the Social Security Agency, Health Care Services and the Army of the Islamic Republic and based on the relevant prescriptions, which are considered government documents, they deliver medicines, and any kind of price increase on drugs will lead to the return of the prescription by the relevant officials in the above organizations.

3. With regard to prescriptions pertaining to noninsured patients, the price of each drug is written on the prescription and these prescriptions are sealed by the technical personnel at pharmacies and are considered documents.

4. All pharmacies are inspected twice a month by Ministry of Health Care, Treatment and Medical Education pharmaceutical affairs inspectors, and any observed violation can lead to penalties, the cutting of allocation, or closure of the pharmacy, but such a thing has not yet happened to any of the foundation's pharmacies.

5. Of course, based on the guidelines from the respected Ministry of Health Care, Treatment and Medical Education, a fee is collected by the pharmacy's technical personnel for each prescription. This amount is in addition to the money for the medicine, and the amount for that is also precisely set in those guidelines.

6. Since their inception, the foundation's pharmacies have delivered about 55,000 prescriptions per month for the three organizations mentioned above and each pharmacy delivers an average of 1,500 to 2,000 prescriptions every 24 hours.

7. With regard to consumer necessities in the hospital, as you know, most of these necessities are obtained on the open market and in the streets of Tehran, and their prices increase without restriction every day. Despite this problem, the hospital's consumer needs are obtained

and made available to the patients at the same price at which they are purchased. Nothing is collected from patients who are eligible for discounts or free drugs, and there has yet to be the slightest protest or problem with regard to this volume of activity.

8. It would be appropriate for the respected Majles deputy, as was recommended by the respected Speaker of the Majles, to go to the relevant pharmacies along with some inspectors to obtain exact information about the operational details and quality of service, so that, God willing, the services and labor of the dear brothers employed at the pharmacies will not be damaged in this way, and so that encounters based on incomplete information will not create disillusionment for workers at any level.